

THE JACOBS REPORT

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GOVERNOR LAUNCHES PROPOSAL: JOBS FOR MICHIGAN FUND

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm unveiled the Jobs for Michigan Fund, a \$2 billion bond proposal that will create thousands of 21st century jobs, as a key part of her comprehensive plan to restart and reshape Michigan's economy.

"Michigan's economy is changing," Granholm said, "and, we're locked in fierce competition for jobs and economic growth with 49 other states and countries around the globe. To win that global competition and to ensure that Michigan remains a great place to live, work, and grow a business, we must embrace this opportunity to reshape our economy."

Granholm's Jobs for Michigan Fund supports a bold plan to grow jobs and diversify the state's economy by investing in four competitive-edge technologies: life sciences, alternative energies, advanced automotive manufacturing, and homeland security and defense. These sectors represent the areas in which Michigan can be the strongest competitor.

Granholm is asking the Legislature to put a constitutional amendment before voters in November to create the Jobs for Michigan Fund. If approved, the state will use \$2 billion in bond proceeds over the next decade to create thousands of jobs for people in all walks of life. The fund will not raise taxes. The fund will be independently audited and will rely on experts, not government, to direct investments in the most likely areas of success.

The fund will be used to diversify and grow the state's economy by focusing the state's resources in four areas:

- Investment in diversification and business development: Accelerating the pace of commercialization and giving start-up companies a foothold in the market place.
- Talent attraction: Bringing and keeping the best research and scientific minds to work on our university campuses and to assist our start-up companies with business plans and development.
- Leveraging federal grants: Giving Michigan research institutions and technology companies the matching funds they need to bring more federal research dollars and technology innovation funds to Michigan.
- Research: Increasing the amount of research, development and innovation taking place in our universities, companies, and nonprofit research institutions.

The Governor pointed to the state's experience with the Life Sciences Corridor and Technology Tri-Corridor initiatives as proof that investment in diversification can have a positive impact. Since 2000, those two initiatives have contributed nearly \$200 million for research and commercialization opportunities in the targeted sectors, particularly in the life sciences, making Michigan one of the fastest-growing states in the nation for new life sciences company formation.

Granholm said the Jobs for Michigan Fund can ensure that the state that produces the most technologically advanced product most people will ever purchase – the 21st century motor vehicle – is also the state that produces clean technologies and alternative energies such as fuel cells to make the nation independent of foreign oil. By investing in our state's future, Granholm believes Michigan will stop the brain drain that occurs when young people leave the state for good paying jobs in cities such as Chicago, New York, and Boston.

“High stakes and global competition make this a time for action,” Granholm noted. “Other states are already passing initiatives that use bonds to retool their economies and attract new businesses and jobs. It is time to build upon our strengths and invest in our future by establishing the Jobs for Michigan Fund now.”

In addition to the Jobs for Tomorrow Fund, Granholm's plan to restart and reshape Michigan's 21st century economy includes the:

- Michigan Jobs and Investment Act, the first significant restructuring of the Single Business Tax in 30 years that will cut taxes for three out of four businesses in Michigan;
- Jobs Today, a three-year plan to rebuild Michigan's infrastructure and create tens of thousands of jobs;
- MiOpportunity Partnership to train unemployed workers for the unfilled positions in our state, including 30,000 this year; and,
- New Merit Scholarship to ensure that every child in Michigan has the opportunity to attend college by guaranteeing \$4,000 scholarships to students who complete two years of college or the equivalent training or certification program.

The constitutional amendment to place the Jobs for Michigan Fund before the voters, along with the enabling legislation, is being sponsored by State Senator Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods), State Senator Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek), State Representative Andy Meisner (D-Ferndale), and State Representative Steve Tobocman (D-Detroit).

JACOBS BILL MODERNIZES 'BLUE' SUNDAY ALCOHOL PROHIBITION

Sen. Jacobs: “These laws no longer serve the people.”

Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) introduced legislation that would lift the statewide ban on Sunday morning alcohol sales. Currently, alcohol cannot be sold from 2:00 a.m. Sunday

morning until noon. The existing restriction on 2:00 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. sales would remain, making the law consistent throughout the week. The proposed legislation would also remove the ban on Christmas Day alcohol sales.

“The Sunday/Christmas ban is a remnant of Prohibition in the 1920’s,” Jacobs said. “These archaic laws were established 75 years ago when society was much different. We are now an economically, culturally and religiously diverse society, and these laws no longer represent the majority of citizens. In addition to being somewhat discriminatory, these laws make it more difficult for restaurants and retailers to do business in the state.”

Blue laws are bothersome to business owners and consumers alike. “My customers express frustration every Sunday morning when they realize that they have to make a second trip to the store at noon to purchase alcohol,” said Craig Mangold, director of Royal Oak’s Holiday Market. “It’s nothing but a waste of time and gas for the customer.”

The unpopular blue laws also put a strain on Mangold’s store operations, which experience disproportionate business during Sunday afternoons. “When a customer selects a bottle of wine or liquor on Sunday morning and I tell them they cannot purchase it until noon, I have never had a customer say, ‘Oh, that makes sense—this is a good law.’ They just get frustrated.”

Jacobs’ proposed legislation allows any county, city village or township to enact local prohibitions as approved by a majority of voters. It also contains language to protect existing local prohibitions.

Currently, some 28 states have banned restrictions on Sunday sales, and another six states have similar legislation pending.

BI-PARTISAN GROUP OF SENATORS PUSH PACKAGE TO PROTECT PATIENT PRIVACY

Bills enact Governor’s call for stronger protection of medical records

A bi-partisan legislative package introduced this week will better protect the privacy of abandoned medical records, as well as genetic information and Medicaid health information. It would also exempt protected health information from the Freedom of Information Act. The bills are part of the Senate Democrats’ continuing effort to promote consumer protection and reflect Governor’s Jennifer M. Granholm’s long-standing call for better protection of consumers’ medical privacy.

Highlights of the package include legislation sponsored by Sen. Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) that requires improved protection, retention and maintenance of medical records. Health care providers authorized to destroy patient records will be required to do so in a manner that protects patient privacy.

“Accidental disclosure from improperly handled medical records leads to identity theft, denial of insurance coverage or financial credit, stigma, and loss of employment opportunities,” Sen. Jacobs said. “No one wants to go through these hassles. Patients deserve the utmost consideration in protecting their valuable personal records.”

Another bill, proposed by Sen. Deborah Cherry (D-Burton), would amend the Freedom of Information Act to exclude 'protected health information' as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Privacy Rules. Passage of the package would join Michigan with Utah in ensuring that individuals served by public agencies have the same protection as people served by private agencies.

"It is obvious that consumer protection should be extended to those who use our Medicaid program, state psychiatric facilities and local mental health agencies," Sen. Cherry said. "Medical records are private and the right to privacy should be valued at the highest levels."

The legislation also includes initiatives that will require that disclosure of genetic information be specifically authorized by written consent, putting genetic information on a par with other sensitive medical information such as HIV/AIDS status or mental health treatment. Another bill would provide for additional protection, retention and maintenance of Medicaid recipient medical records.

Senators Tom George (R-Portage) and Bruce Patterson (R-Canton) joined as sponsors, bolstering the package's bi-partisan appeal.

Governor Granholm supports the legislature's joint effort: "A person's medical history is like their fingerprint: it's unique, deeply personal and rich with information. I have longed called for stronger medical privacy protection in Michigan so I'm thrilled to stand with Senators Cherry and Jacobs to support their legislation. We look forward to working with consumer and patient advocacy groups, the medical community and all of the Michigan Legislature to put these protections into place for Michigan consumers as soon as we can."

Additionally, genetic information obtained for identification purposes in case of emergency or disaster would receive additional protection under the package.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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